Convoy Dispatch

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975 • www.tdu.org — January 2008 # 248

Teamster Inequality and the Pension Divide

A study of Teamster pension plans reveals a growing "Pension Divide" with the new UPS Pension Plan paying the worst benefits in the country.

By the end of the new contracts in 2013, the Pension Divide will widen—creating gaping inequality between Teamsters working for the same companies under our top contracts.

A study of major Teamster pension plans reveals an expanding "Pension Divide" that is creating growing inequality between Teamsters who work for the same companies under different pension funds.

By the end of the UPS, freight and carhaul contracts in 2013, the Pension Divide will grow much worse, with tens of thousands of Teamsters receiving 25- or 30-and-out benefits of $5,000 per month. Others will receive as little as $3,000 a month.

UPS pension levels were used as the basis of comparison for the study. But in most of the plans, freight and carhaul Teamsters and members covered by other Teamster contracts get the same or similar benefits.

The study's findings are laid out in a Pension Comparison Chart that compares 17 major pension plans.

The chart reveals that the lowest benefits are paid by the new UPS Pension Plan that covers 44,000 Teamsters in the Carolinas and the Central and Southern Regions.

While the new UPS Plan is at the bottom of the Pension Divide, other major Teamster plans are also falling behind.

Report and chart on pgs. 6-7.

Teamsters Have New Rights to Pension Information

Effective Jan. 1, participants (active and retired) in pension plans have new, expanded rights to obtain information from their plan.

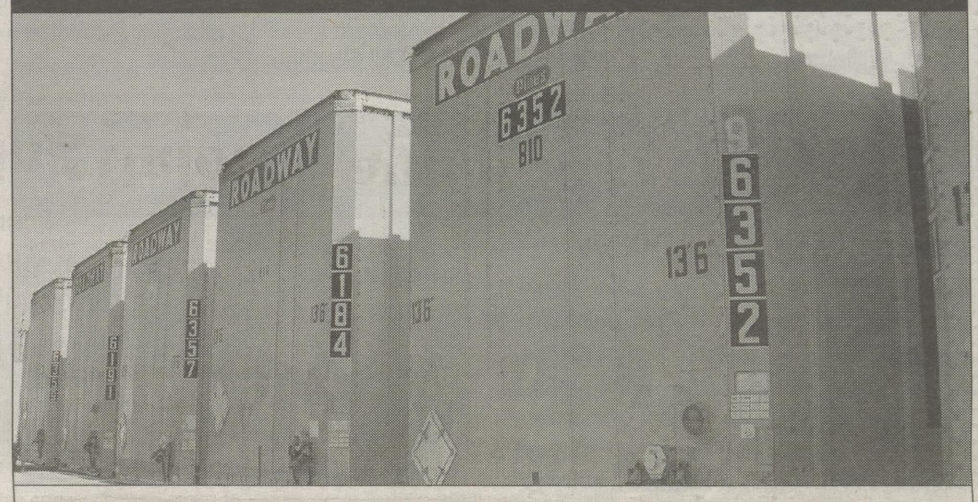
The Pension Protection Act requires that participants have the right to obtain any periodic actuary report, any quarterly, semi-annual or annual financial report, and other documents.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union and the Pension Rights Center led the lobbying effort that won members these rights.

Teamsters who want to exercise their rights to get this info can contact TDU to obtain a model letter to send to your fund.

Because the law is new, it may take some time to sort out how these rights are implemented. TDU will work with Teamsters to ensure that they can get the information that they are entitled to.

Freight Concessions

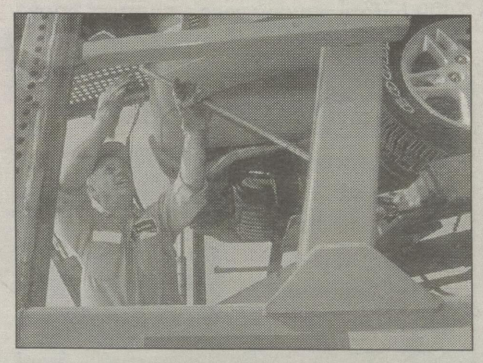


▶ Proposed Freight Contract: Too Many Giveaways—Pg. 5

The proposed freight contract is out for a vote. Our report analyzes the concessions that threaten to gut Teamster standards in the trucking industry.

▶ Downsizing Union Standards in a Growth Industry—Pg. 4

The Hoffa administration blames the nonunion competition for the concessions in the freight contract—at the same time as it gives our biggest nonunion competitor, UPS Freight, a substandard deal. How can freight Teamsters defeat this one-two punch dragging our standards down to the nonunion level?



Bargaining To Open on New Carhaul Contract

The IBT Carhaul Division will soon start bargaining on a new national contract. But the negotiations will be held under a cloud of concessions at Allied and PTS. **Pg 3.**

UPSers Prepare to Enforce New Language

Language changes in the new UPS contract are now in effect. UPS Teamsters prepare to stay on top of new language and defend their rights. **Pgs. 8-9**

Letters From Our Members

Outstanding commitment to the reform movement. Teamsters Louis Irby (left) and Antonio Bracy (right) present long-time TDU member and leader Willie Hardy with an award recognizing his years of hard work for the movement to build a stronger Teamsters Union. Willie is a member of the TDU ISC and the TDU Southern Organizer.

BLET: Get Our Union Back on the Right Track

I am very frustrated with the BLET, as are a great many other members.

It must have come as a great shock to all of the General Chairmen who negotiated the "great deal" on the Norfolk Southern that it was defeated. The deal sucked. Guess what? We can read!

I had hoped that Hoffa and the Teamsters would have done a better job on the Hahs investigation. Six months suspension: what a joke. If I stole money from Norfolk Southern, I would be prosecuted and probably go to jail.

Hoffa should have demanded Hahs' resignation and repayment of all the pilfered funds.

I've been an engineer for almost 40 years. I've had it with weak contracts and weak representation. We need to give the younger guys who are coming up a reason to believe in the union.

Ramon Hernandez
BLET Div. 831
Norfolk Southern
Detroit

Editor's Note: The Independent Review Board agrees that the six-month suspension is inadequate. They recently rejected the proposed settlement, and Hahs may now face a harsher penalty. For more details, go to www.tdu.org/node/1633.

Ask the Teamster Troublemaker

How Do I Get a Copy of My Contract?

Last April, the majority of Teamster members at Allied approved concessions on the carhaul contract. I need the updated version of the contract we work under, especially because we have lots of pay rates. It's been eight months; still nothing in writing. What can we do?

Losing Daily at Allied

Dear Brother,

It doesn't seem like too much to ask to get a copy of your contract. Unfortunately, you are not alone. Many Teamsters go without a copy of their contract. They shouldn't. More members reading their contract means a stronger union.

Recently we heard from Teamsters at the Vons warehouse near Los Angeles who have been trying to get a copy of their contract from Local 848. Finally they were sent a copy of a contract that expired in 2005, along with a couple pages of notes on changes. The local officers say they are still working out language details with the employer (for three years?).

Under federal labor law, every member has a right to the contract they work under, as well as a copy of the IBT constitution and their local union bylaws.

We suggest you send a letter (perhaps certified mail) to your local requesting your contract. You may want to have a number of co-workers sign on to the letter.

Your officers cannot use "printing delay" as an excuse; they must have a copy at the union hall, as they have a legal duty to enforce it. They can go to the copy machine and send you a copy of that. Let us know if you don't get a response or if you have further questions.

Let's get more Teamsters knowledgeable about their contract and how to enforce it.

P.S. The UPS National Contract was just ratified. But if it takes the IBT as long as it did last time, it will be 2009 before anyone sees a contract book.

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the addresses below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210. Phone: (313) 842-2600. Fax: (313) 842-0227. E-mail: tdudetroit@tdu.org Website: www.tdu.org

NY Office: 104 Montgomery St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225. Phone: (718) 287-3283. Fax: (718) 287-3287. E-mail: tdueast@tdu.org

E-Mail Your Letter

Visit our web page at **www.tdu.org** and use the link provided there, or e-mail your letter to **letters@tdu.org**.

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TDU International Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:
Frank Halstead, Los Angeles Local 572
Sandy Pope, New York Local 805
Michael Ruscigno, New York Local 802
Michael Savwoir, Kansas City Local 41

Organizer:
Ken Paff, Detroit

Trustees:
Gary Brooks, Chicago Local 705
Willie Hardy, Memphis Local 667
Joe Sexauer, Chicago Local 743

Members:
Dan Campbell, Milwaukee Local 200
Duke Clark, Chicago Local 726
Nichele Fulmore, North Carolina Local 391
Toni Jackson, Memphis Local 667
Stefan Ostrach, Oregon Local 206
Rick Sather, Minneapolis Local 638
Walter Taylor, New York Local 814

Alternates:
Alex Tenchavez, Los Angeles Local 396
Hugh Sawyer, BLET Div. 316
Jim Reynolds, New York Local 804

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in Sept. 2006 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had 250 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BYLAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs should be elected by regions. No more trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he or she makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in their jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for members, and subject to membership approval.

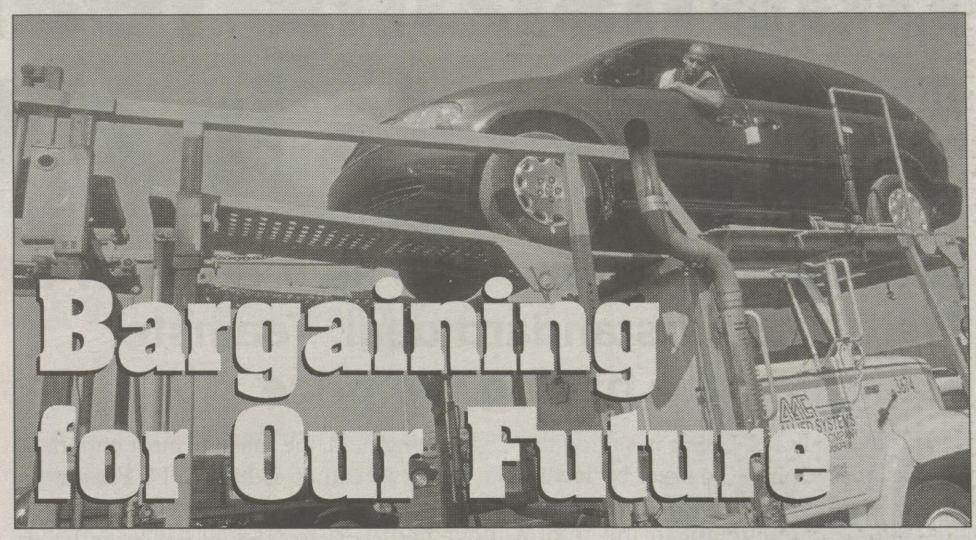
IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Carhaul Bargaining to Open

The IBT Carhaul Division will soon start bargaining for a new national contract.

But the negotiations will be held under a cloud of concessions at Allied and PTS.



The IBT Carhaul Division will soon start bargaining with the employers for a new national contract. The current contract expires May 31. But the negotiations will be held under a cloud of concessions.

As of mid-January, the future of the 1,500 Teamsters employed at PTS is up in the air. In December the International Union conducted a vote of Allied Teamsters to cut the wages of PTS Teamsters in the event that Allied takes over PTS.

We need a plan to save good Teamster jobs, not just a plan to make friends with Ron Burkle.

The Hoffa administration is closely aligned with the private investment firm Yucaipa and its principal owner, Ron Burkle. Yucaipa first took control of PTS, then later, with IBT help, took control of Allied and imposed 17.5 percent concessions last summer.

The future of PTS and its Teamster employees will soon be sorted out in bankruptcy court in Buffalo. Allied is expected to re-submit a bid to take over the assets of the company.

IBT Calls for Terminals to Close

PTS Teamsters are getting little help or even information from the International Union. The Hoffa administration is so loyal to Burkle that they have called—in advance of any merger of the two companies—for some PTS terminals to be closed: "PTS kept too many poorly operating terminals open," stated the Carhaul Division's letter to members in December.

Lansing Local 580 PTS steward George Warner and St. Louis Local 604 filed a motion in bankruptcy court in Georgia asking that no concessions be imposed on the PTS Teamsters without their being allowed a vote. Instead of Allied filing opposition papers, it was the IBT who carried the water for Yucaipa, calling for the motion to be dismissed. No hearing has been held as of mid-January.

We need a plan to save good Teamster jobs, not just a plan to make friends with Ron Burkle.

Local unions received notice in late December that locals and members only have until Jan. 15 to submit bargaining proposals. Many locals didn't have time to even hold a proposal meeting. Carhaulers who would like to submit proposals can obtain the proper IBT form at www.tdu.org and submit them.

The contract will cover Allied, PTS (if it still exists separately), Jack Cooper, PMT, Cassens, Active, and some yard companies. With Allied and PTS making up over half of the industry, the other companies will be looking to match the 17.5 percent cut and three-year wage freeze at Allied.

Carhaulers are looking to hold the line, save good jobs and a future for ourselves and our union. We need a plan to bring Allied back up to scale, and not degrade the whole contract.

If you want to be part of making it happen, contact TDU today.

Norfolk Southern, BLET Sent Back to the Table

Rail Teamsters Derail Early Deal

Teamster engineers have voted down an early deal in a close vote on the Norfolk Southern. But BLET officials are aiming to wrap up a new contract well before the current agreement expires in 2009.

Rank-and-file Teamsters campaigned hard to reject the contract, and they voted down the proposed deal by 1,143 votes No to 1,050 votes Yes. The proposed deal would last until 2014.

The proposed agreement would have continued a controversial bonus pay system, but reduced the bonus after 2009. Under the bonus system, members are paid a bonus in lieu of wage increases, based on financial goals set by the company.

The proposed agreement also contained language that could take away vacations from some engineers off work for illness or disability. Plus, the agreement failed to guarantee the work of yard engineers. Yard Teamsters voted heavily against the agreement.

BLET officials campaigned hard for a big Yes vote. In a letter supporting the deal, BLET Vice President Marcus Reuf called members who opposed the contract "haters."

In the end, enough BLET members decided to hold out for a better deal.

Now the BLET has announced that they will return to the table in early 2008.

With this deal rejected, will the General Chairmen reach out to the members to find out what they want? Many members want a more secure wage structure, and they are worried about the rising cost of insurance premiums. Working conditions were once again completely ignored in this agreement.

The Deal Breakers

NS Teamsters rejected givebacks in a proposed early deal:

- ✘ **Reduction in the NS bonus system after 2009**
- ✘ **Elimination of vacation for some engineers off work for illness or disability**
- ✘ **No job protection for yard engineers**

Members Can Stop DHL Deal

DHL bargaining is moving on to wages, and is expected to wrap up in January. Disastrous concessions have already been agreed to in the tentative deal, so members need to prepare now to turn out a big vote.

Officers involved in the negotiations report that the proposed tentative deal will include the increased use of part-timers, on docks and for air pick-ups. It will contain language to "red circle" existing full-time Teamsters, by name, and offer them protection for 40 hours work.

A red circle is more like a red noose. Under this arrangement, as Teamsters leave, DHL could utilize more and more part-timers. This would destroy good Teamster jobs and also eliminate the overtime that many Teamsters rely on. And it will tighten that noose.

The company may try to buy some votes with a slightly larger wage increase. Even if they do, DHL Teamsters will still be over $6 behind UPS drivers. And no wage boost is worth giving away the future in massive concessions.

This deal can be stopped, and very likely will, if we start now to organize to Vote No on the national agreement and the so-called Pick Up and Delivery Supplement where the dirty concessions will be located. We stopped this deal once, last summer, and we can kill it for good this time. The bigger the No vote, the more change we'll win.

We have to wait until we see it the proposal in writing, but Teamsters should prepare now. Talk to your fellow Teamsters. Don't let anyone tell you "it's a done deal" because it is not, unless we vote for it. We should study the deal, inform our fellow Teamsters, and determine our own future as Teamsters.

Concessions in Freight

Downsizing Teamster Standards in a Growth Industry

The IBT is warning about nonunion competition at the same time as it gives UPS Freight a substandard deal. Teamster standards are paying the price.

The International Union is selling the concessionary freight contract by lecturing members about the threat of nonunion competition.

But at the same time, the Hoffa administration is giving our biggest nonunion competition, UPS Freight, a substandard deal in Indianapolis—and promoting that concessionary package as the "template" for all UPS Freight terminals that we organize going forward.

This isn't a plan for rebuilding union power in freight. It's a one-two punch for dragging Teamster standards down to the nonunion level.

On Jan. 8, Hoffa met with some 200 local union officials about the proposed tentative freight contract. A slide show was presented that was 100 percent corporate in content: Yellow-Roadway stock is down. The economy is bad. Nonunion competition is strong.

Not one slide was about building Teamster power—or organizing. And in the whole day, UPS Freight was never mentioned once.

Hoffa directed local officials to go home and sell the contract. He said he would keep track of how many "Yes" votes each official turned out for his concessionary deal.

Freight Teamsters are adults. We don't need our union to spoon-feed us a sales job. We need leaders with a plan for protecting our industry standards—and strengthening them for the future.

Growth Not Surrender

No doubt we face nonunion competition. The largest competitor of YRC and ABF is UPS Freight, which employs 15,000 drivers and dock workers and is growing fast. If we want to level the playing field, the first and most important thing we can do is bring UPS Freight up to the NMFA level.

Our first step should not be to lower the NMFA down to match UPS Freight, which is what is proposed in this deal. Converting freight Teamsters to "utility employees," low-paid part-time dock casuals, allowing subcontracting out line haul work, and a longer new-hire period: these are all taken from the UPS Freight playbook.

Instead, our union needs a national campaign to bring UPS Freight into our national contract. That would be a union-building effort that all Teamster members could get behind.

UPS Freight

On a national conference call about UPS Freight this month, Hoffa and Parcel Division Director Ken Hall poured water on the idea of improving on the UPS Freight contract that was negotiated in Indianapolis.

Hall called that deal—which includes low-wage part-time dock workers, utility employees, the same old company pension plan, and costs $150 per month for family health coverage—the "template" for a national contract with UPS Freight.

It is common sense that the more terminals we organize the more bargaining power our union will have to win a stronger contract. Why would the Hoffa administration be telling local officers that the contract we got by organizing 125 UPS Freight employees in Indianapolis is the best we can do?

Many officers and members want to aim higher. On that same conference call a number of officers said they wanted to bargain to get Teamster pensions and benefits into the contract. Leaders in the Freight Division are concerned about any contract that could undercut the NMFA.

The proposed freight agreement also contains a new section that allows employers to use nonunion line haul trucking to reduce railing to cut transit times. This nonunion line haul must be with a "Preferred Company" that the union hopes to organize.

Will our union hold these "Preferred Companies" to NMFA standards? Or will the Hoffa administration water down our union standards in freight with even more substandard contracts?

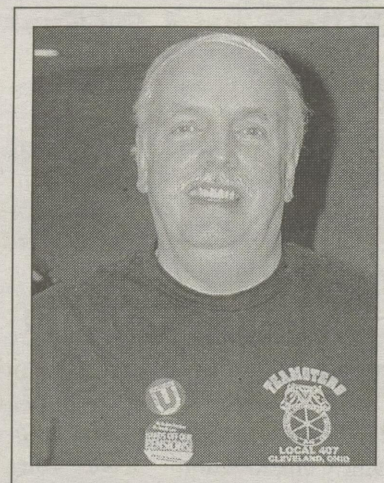
Building Teamster Power

Trucking is a growth industry. But the Hoffa administration is downsizing our standards—and putting its energy into lowering members expectations instead of mobilizing to defeat concessions and bring the nonunion competition up to Teamster standards.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union is committed to building a national rank-and-file movement to rebuild Teamster Power.

We love our union and are committed to fighting for its future—by resisting concessions, helping to organize the unorganized, and holding our Teamster officials accountable to our union's mission: fighting for a better life for working people and our families.

That's a cause worth trucking for. Join TDU today—or contact us for more information.



I'm Voting NO

"When some of my managers heard about the sweeheart deal Hoffa and Hall made with UPS Freight they cringed because they knew Yellow would have trouble competing with them! Now Hoffa and Johnson want us to come down to UPS Freight's level! I thought the whole idea was to organize the nonunions and bring them up to our standards, not bring us down to theirs! I'm voting NO!"

Greg Smith, Local 407
Yellow, Cleveland

Freight2008.org

- **Get contract info** and updates about the proposed NMFA
- **Download bulletins** to distribute and post and help spread the word
- **Make sure freight Teamsters** cast an informed vote

Central States Retiree Healthcare

The changes in the cost of retiree health care associated with the tentative contract for freight Teamsters in the Central States Health & Welfare Fund are different from those at UPS, even though the benefit money is identical for both groups.

UPS retirees will pay $200 per month ($400 for a couple) if they retire at 55 or older. The freight schedule proposed is as follows:

Under age 60: Continue with present high (and increasing) rates

Retire age 60: $200 per mo/$400 couple; will increase $25 per year

Retire age 61: $150/$300; will increase $25 per year

Retire age 62: $100/$200

Retire age 63: $100/$200; you get 2 years of free medi-gap coverage when reach 65

Retire age 64: $100/$200; you get 4 years of free medi-gap coverage when reach 65

Retire age 65: You get 6 years of free medi-gap coverage

The later you retire, the sweeter the deal. Central States Fund policies have already pushed the average retirement age from 59.5 to 61.5 in just five years. Their goal is to keep pushing it higher.

Freight Contract: Too Many Giveaways

The proposed tentative National Master Freight Agreement is headed for a vote.

This is a dangerous proposal that Teamsters should study carefully. The power is in the hands of the Teamsters who move the freight.

There are serious givebacks in the deal. Unlimited "utility employees" in every terminal who will combine road, city, dock, and yard work, without regard to local union jurisdiction. Four-hour dock casuals paid $14, a rate frozen until 2013. The new-hire tiered wage is stretched out, from two years to three. The wage increase will not keep up with inflation.

There are positives in the contract, too. For example, when there are layoffs at a terminal and the average overtime per Teamster exceeds 10 hours per week, a fraction of the laid off Teamsters must be recalled to bring the average OT down to 10 hours.

But the negatives are serious, and threaten to drive our contract down to nonunion standards. That's why the American Trucking Associations' publication bragged about YRC winning the "flexibility" they wanted in this contract offer.

Here is an overview of the changes:

Utility Employees (Article 3): This is premium service on steroids, to cover the whole operation. There is no limit on the number of utility employees, who will work the city, dock, road and yard "in most, if not all locations" and will even do dock, yard or fueling at foreign terminals. Utility employees will be a separate list and paid $1 more per hour. The employer can schedule the work week starting Sunday, Monday or Tuesday, 5-8s or 4-10s; may have multiple start times during the week.

$14 Casuals (Article 3): Four-hour dock casuals paid $14 per hour for the life of the contract. Four-hour supplemental casuals shall not be counted when a local tallies excess casuals to require hiring.

Substitute Service (Article 29): A new section will allow employers to use nonunion line-haul trucking, up to four percent of total miles in 2008, then increasing yearly to nine percent of the total line-haul miles in 2012, to allow carriers to reduce railing to cut transit times. But Yellow, Roadway and ABF are already reducing railing. This will allow them to use nonunion road drivers, instead of increasing our road boards with Teamster jobs. This nonunion line haul must be with a "Preferred Company" that the union hopes to organize.

Tiered Wage Lengthened: Teamster members across the country asked that the tiered wage for new hires, many of them experienced Teamsters, be eliminated. Instead they made it worse: from two years to three years in length. For CDL holders, it is 85-90-95 percent over three years; for non-CDL holders it would be 70-75-80 percent of union scale. The only improvement is when a driver moves from one YRC company to another (one year progression).

Wages Would Fall Behind: Proposed wage increases of 50¢-40¢-45¢-40¢-45¢ (mileage of 1.25¢-1¢-1.125¢-1¢-1.125¢). This is an average of 1.9 percent a year. If inflation holds at three percent a year, we will lose $1.34 per hour in buying power over the life of this contract. That's about $4,000 a year you'll need to cut from your budget. With nonunion drivers' wages increasing, will they pass ours?

Benefits: The contract provides $1 per hour each year to be divided between pension and health and welfare. We hope it will be enough, but we learned in the last contract that hope is not enough, especially in a five-year contract. If any official promises you "no benefit cuts" in this contract deal, ask them to put that in the form of a binding agreement.

Teamsters must work more days in order to qualify for benefits: three days (instead of two) a week in the Central States Fund, 100 hours a month (instead of 60) in the West.

Study the contract. Talk to your fellow workers. Make a choice. Cast your vote.

A Whole New Ballgame

"Beware the utility driver classification. You can say good-bye to most of what we've known as city and road drivers. There are no limits on using utility drivers so you can guarantee management will make the most of it. It's a big change in the operations model and we're the guinea pigs. If this contract passes, it's whole new ballgame and the old rules are out the window.

Al Wilkins, Local 480
Roadway, Nashville

Use Your Power to Vote

The power is in the hands of freight Teamsters, who will vote on the tentative agreement and all supplements. Voting will include all freight Teamsters, including ABF, except DHL. ABF and other freight Teamsters will vote because the Freight Division intends to hold ABF to the same standard contract.

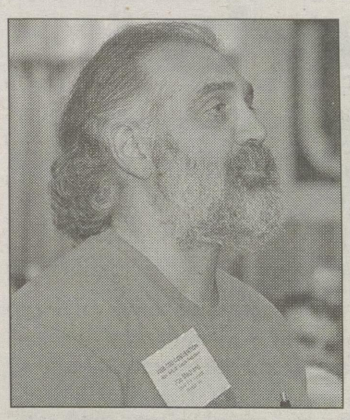
Freight Teamsters will get two ballots: one for the master, and one for the regional supplement. If you are opposed to the agreement, it makes sense to vote No on both. (On the recent UPS agreement, three supplements were rejected in Pennsylvania and New York. In all three cases, members quickly won gains there).

Ballots are mailed on Jan. 14 and must be received in Washington by Feb. 8. Majority rule will prevail. Your vote is secret.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union members have gone to court several times to win the right to fair contract votes. We won the right to obtain all supplements and the NMFA on the date they are given to officials at the "two-person" meeting. Because we post them on the web, now even the IBT posts them!

TDU fought for and won the right to majority rule in contracts (previously it took two-thirds to reject) in 1988, and won the right to a separate vote on the supplements in 1991. Leaders in the Hoffa administration fought against both of these reforms.

We urge all freight Teamsters to use their right to vote.

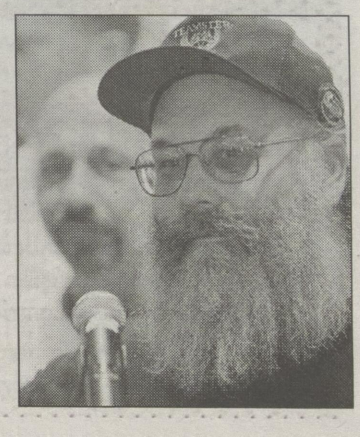


"Four-hour casuals on the dock plays right into management's tactic of divide and conquer. Why continue to have full-time dock Teamsters? And what about the guys in the city and on the road? Having the "flexibility" of both dock casuals and utility drivers is bound to affect our work schedules and hours. Vote this down or expect major changes in how we work."

Joe Medrano, Local 614
USF Holland, Pontiac, Mich.

"They didn't get rid of the new hire wage progression and even made it longer. Thirty days is enough time to figure out if the guy can do the work or not. All the different rates hurt our union solidarity. We need same day's pay for same day's work."

Barry Strohl, Local 509
Roadway, Greenville, S.C.



The Teamster

New UPS Plan Pays the Lowest Benefits

A study of major Teamster pension plans reveals a growing "Benefit Divide," with the new UPS Pension Plan paying the worst benefits in the country.

By the end of the contract in 2013, the Benefit Divide will grow much worse, with tens of thousands of UPS Teamsters receiving 25- or 30-and-out benefits of $5,000 per month while the UPS Plan pays just $3,000.

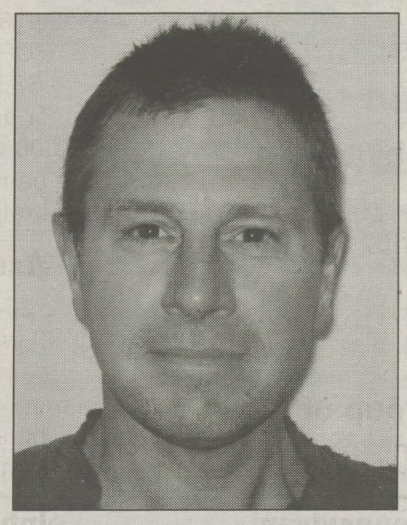
Some Teamster funds are also falling behind as the Benefit Divide grows—but none as far as the new UPS plan, which covers 44,000 Teamsters in the Carolinas and the Central and Southern Regions—nearly half of the company's full-time workforce.

The Pension Comparison Chart on the facing page shows the range and variation of benefits of the great majority of pension plans covering UPS Teamsters.

While this information pertains to UPS Teamsters, almost all of these funds cover other Teamsters as well. In most of these plans, freight and carhaul Teamsters and members covered by other Teamster contracts get the same or similar benefits.

Key findings of our preliminary Pension Comparison study include:

- **The UPS Pension Plan pays the lowest level of benefits and will save the company billions in reduced benefit costs.** There is not a single plan, large or small, covering UPS Teamsters that is worse. Almost all provide a better pension, and some provide a far superior pension. Many provide a larger pension at 25 years than the UPS Plan pays for 30 years service.
- **The Benefit Divide will grow wider over the life of the new master contracts.** By the end of the new UPS agreement contract in 2013, tens of thousands of Teamsters in the Western Region will retire with a $5,000 pension, with less than 30 years service. So will UPS Teamsters in Washington, D.C. In some other areas UPS Teamsters will retire with $4,000 for 30-and-out.
- **While the new UPS Plan is at the bottom of the Benefit Divide, other major Teamster plans are also falling behind.**



Todd Hartsell
Local 90, UPS
Des Moines, Iowa

We Do the Same Work, We Need the Same Benefits

"44,000 Teamsters are now in the new UPS Pension Plan. When I look at the numbers, it's clear we're going to get a pension far below what most UPS workers get from other plans. That's why UPS was willing to pay $6 billion to get out. Folks voted for it, but should realize UPS is saving a ton of money on us.

"We do the same work, pay the same dues, and need the same benefits that UPS pays out for our brothers and sisters across the country. It's time to start pressing for pension improvements from this new plan. Five more years is too long to wait to get beyond what we were promised in 1997."

What Caused the Divide?

A critical factor behind the growing Benefit Divide is the wide range in pension accruals, the amount you earn (or "accrue") each year to your monthly pension benefit upon retirement.

Many Teamsters are used to benefit structures like "$3,500 for 30-and-out." As you look over the Pension Comparison chart, many of the benchmark benefits look like that.

But many Teamster pension funds have shifted their benefit structure to one based on an annual accrual, or multiplier. Under this system, you earn (or "accrue") money toward your monthly pension benefit each year you work.

Within five years, most Teamsters will be getting a pension based on the accrual method, because those benefits are quickly surpassing the existing 25-and-out and 30-and-out benefits.

For example, the Western Pennsylvania plan currently has a $3,500 30-and-out benefit. But it also has an accrual system that will rapidly overtake that benefit. That's why by the end of the current UPS contract, members will be able to retire with about $4,300 there. Some pension plans will be paying more, some less, but most will be in that range.

But the accrual in the UPS Plan is set artificially low and set to rise slowly. And it cannot be improved for five and a half years, because it is locked down by the contract.

While the accrual rate will be $400 in some funds and $300 in a number of funds, the accrual in the UPS Pension Plan will be only get to $158 by the end of the contract. This is even lower than the Central States Pension Fund, where the accrual will reach $200 by 2013.

Our union needs a comprehensive plan to bring all benefits up to the highest level.

The comparison chart reveals the wide range and variation of benefits for UPS Teamsters—and many other Teamsters earning top pension benefits as well. Our union needs a comprehensive plan to bring all benefits up to the highest levels and to upgrade all Teamster contracts so that Teamsters getting inferior benefits can achieve quality pensions.

NOTE: This snapshot, summary information on the various pension plans is intended for general comparison purposes. We have attempted as much as possible to list comparable benefits (e.g. 30-and-out). In this summary, we cannot provide detailed or full information on the range of benefits available in the plans. Also note that this chart omits a few plans; a more complete listing will soon be available at www.tdu.org.

Average Retirement Age Goes Up:

Central States Fund Director Reports

The Director of the Central States Pension Fund, Thomas Nyhan, told over 100 local union officers in December that he did not want UPS to split off from the Fund, but could not stop it because the International Union and management cut the deal. "We didn't want to lose our biggest contributor," Nyhan stated.

Nyhan also stated that

- Because of the UPS pullout, the ratio of retirees to active workers will eventually reach 3 to 1. (It was 1.4 to 1 in 2007)
- The fund is 63 percent funded, but will now rise to 75 percent with the $6.1 billion withdrawal payment from UPS. The funded ratio is growing due to pension cuts and increased employer contributions.
- The fund has made its cuts and implemented its recovery plan. No further cuts will be made.
- The rule that requires employers to increase contributions by eight percent a year should stay in place five years; then it can come down to six percent and then four percent.
- The Central States Health & Welfare Fund has been taking in more money than it spends on benefits, and has 12.7 months of reserve funds.
- The average retirement age has increased in just five years from 59.5 to 61.5.

The last point shows the negative impact of jacking up the cost of retiree healthcare on our members and families. Many Teamsters just cannot afford to retire, and on average, Teamsters have to work two extra years, compared to just five years ago.

Benefit Divide

Comparison of Pension Benefits for UPS Teamsters

The New UPS Pension Plan

$2,500 25-at-57

$3,000 30-and-out

The accrual rises to just $158.50 by the end of the contract.

- **Pays the lowest pension benefits of any fund covering UPS Teamsters**
- **Covers 44,000 UPS Teamsters in the Carolinas and Central and Southern Regions—the single largest group of UPS Teamsters covered by any plan**

Western Conference

"80-and-out" for UPS, freight, and many others (age + years of service). A UPS worker at age 52 with 28 years service can retire with $3,500 presently. The accrual (monthly pension increase for a year worked) for a 20-year UPS worker in August 2008 will be $342, and by 2012 it will be $464, so UPS Teamster pensions will be approximately $5,000 per month for Teamsters retiring in 2013.

Washington, D.C. Area (Local 639)

$5,000 (approx.) at present for 30-and-out at any age. The accrual for this year is $445, so pensions will rise quite a bit higher during the life of the contract.

New England

$2,500 for 25-at-57 plus $150 for each additional year of service. $3,500 for 30 and out at 57. $150 for each additional year of service, up to $4,700 for 38 years. Beginning October 2008, a supplement of $1,000 per month will be paid to those between the ages of 60 and 62 who retire with 30-and-out or 25-at-57 or more.

New York State

$5,500 (approx.) for 30-and-out at any age.

Western Pennsylvania

$3,500 for 30-and-out at present. By the end of the current contract in 2013 the 30-and-out benefit will be approximately $4,300 per month.

Central Pennsylvania

$3,100 for 25 years at age 57. Teamsters can retire with a higher overall amount based on contributions accrued in three separate Central PA plans.

Philadelphia Area

$3,590 for 30-and-out.

This will increase by $131 per year, thus will be $4,248 per month by 2013.

New Jersey (Local 177)

$3,700 for 25-at-55.

$3,700 for 30-and-out at any age.

New York City (Local 804)

$3,100 for 25-and-out at any age.

$3,600 for 25-at-55, or 30-and-out at any age.

Missouri (Local 688)

$2,600 for 25-at-57; $3,100 for 30-and-out, $3,200 for 30-at-57; $100 extra for each year of age beyond 61 and also for each year of service (e.g. $4,000 for 35-at-64).

Wisconsin (Local 344)

$2,000 for 25-and-out at any age; $3,000 for 30-and-out; $101 more for each additional year.

Hagerstown, Maryland (Local 992)

$3,000 for 25-at-57.

$3,600 for 30-and-out.

$4,200 for 35-and-out.

Virginia (Joint Council 83)

$2,500 for 25-and-out.

$3,500 for 30-and-out.

$4,000 for 35-and-out.

West Virginia (Locals 175 and 505)

$3,000 for 30-and-out.

$4,250 for 35-and-out.

Central States
(covers Carolinas, the South and much of the Central Region, but no longer any active UPS Teamsters)

A UPS (or freight, carhaul, etc.) Teamster with 30 years can presently retire with $3,050 at age 62, or $2,913 at age 57. 25-at-57 is presently $2,413. The accrual will reach $196 per year by 2012, so Central States pensions even for early retirees will be greater than the UPS Plan.

Chicago Area (Local 705)

$2,500 for 25-and-out, with a lump sum of $25,000; $3,000 for 30-and-out, with $30,000 lump sum; $3,500 for 35-and-out, with $35,000 lump sum. Option to reject lump sum and add $8 per year of service to pension (e.g. $3,240 for 30-and-out). The Local 705 UPS contract is separate from the national and not bargained yet, so we do not know if there will be pension improvements.

Illinois and Indiana (Local 710 Plan)

$2,800 for 25-and-out, $3,300 for 30-and-out, $3,800 for 35-and-out. The Local 710 UPS contract is separate from the national and not bargained yet.

Why Is Your Accrual Rate Important?

Many Teamster pension funds have shifted their benefit structure to one based on an annual accrual, or multiplier. Under this system, you earn (or "accrue") a monthly pension amount each year you work. And if you earn a full pension, you will get the sum of all those annual accruals as your pension amount. The higher the accrual, the higher your pension.

Many Teamsters are used to a different benefit structure, such as "$3,500 for 30-and-out." But within five years, most Teamsters will be getting a pension based on the accrual method, because as plans phase those benefits in, they will quickly surpass the existing 25-and-out and 30-and-out benefits.

Some plans state the accrual as a dollar amount, while others use a percentage of what is contributed during the year by the employer on your behalf. For example, if the employer contributes $14,000 and the accrual rate is two percent, that would add $280 to your monthly pension this year. Since the employer contribution goes up each year, the accrual will also.

For example, the Western Pennsylvania plan currently has a $3,500 30-and-out benefit. But it also has an accrual system that will rapidly overtake that benefit. By the end of the current contract, members will be able to retire with about $4,300 there.

Some pension plans will be paying more, some less, but most will be in that range. So understanding the accrual for your pension plan is very important.

UPS management knows this well. That's why they have tied the new UPS Pension benefit to a small accrual, one that will be far below the other plans by 2012.

New York: Pension Increases Are Passing Us By

"When Local 804 won 25 & Out benefits, our pension fund established itself as the gold standard in our union. What happened?

"Our Executive Board has consistently and unanimously conveyed to the membership that our pension is strong and one of the best in the country. But many UPS Teamsters get superior benefits to ours—and more funds are slated to pass us by by the end of this contract.

"Local 804 members defeated pension cuts in the new contract and we will continue to mobilize to win the pension improvements we deserve."

Jim Reynolds, Local 804
Alt. Steward, UPS
New York

UPSers Eye New Language

Language changes in the new UPS contract are now in effect—even though we won't get our wage or benefit increases until August.

UPS Teamsters need to stay on top of new language—and make it work in our favor.

Time to File Grievances Cut in Central Region

UPS Teamsters in the Central Region will have half as much time to file a grievance under the new contract. Article 5 of the Central Region supplement states that employees must "reduce the grievance to writing on the regular grievance form provided by the union and have it submitted to the company within five (5) working days."

That's a big change from the 10 working days we had in the past and members will need to be on the ball to get grievances filed in a timely manner.

Also, the time the steward has to grieve discipline has been reduced from 10 working days to 10 *calendar* days.

Watch Out for New Subcontracting Loopholes

Article 26 contains new contract language that will make it harder for local unions to police subcontracting through the grievance procedure.

Under new language in Section 3, "only the Local Union with jurisdiction in the geographic area in which a subcontracted feeder movement originates" can file a grievance for subcontracting.

This will prohibit local unions who are being "run over" from aggressively taking on the subcontracting.

Affected locals will be forced to appeal to the Parcel and Small Package Division which will also have the right to file a subcontracting grievance in these cases.

UPS Teamsters need to keep the pressure on the Parcel Division to stop subcontracting when some locals aren't.

Excessive Overtime: Opt-In, Opt-Out Up in the Air

UPS is being even more inconsistent than usual in its implementation of the new contract language on excessive overtime grievances.

The new contract requires the company to post a "9.5 opt-in/opt-out" list before Jan. 1 to govern 9.5 grievances through May 31. Drivers who "opt-out" of the 9.5 language will have no right to file a grievance alleging excessive overtime until June 1.

While management circulated the opt-in/opt-out list in some cities as early as Dec. 15, drivers in most areas report that UPS has still taken no action at all.

In other locals, members report that UPS has agreed to go by the old 9.5 language under which all members are eligible to grieve excessive overtime.

That suits many UPS Teamsters just fine who don't understand why our International Union bargained away the right of some members to file excessive overtime grievances.

"As steward, I will be encouraging everyone to sign the 'opt in' list to limit the excessive overtime. I hope I can get all to sign it, but there may be some folks who resist it," said John Price, a Local 773 steward from Stroudsburg, Penn.

"If nearly everyone 'opts-in' we can make this really become 'non-language' and protect the right of all employees to grieve excessive overtime. It works well now on the honor system. If your boss knows you don't want the overtime and are willing to file the grievance he dispatches you much more carefully. If he knows you would like the overtime they obviously desire to have you work such hours," said Price.

"However by not signing the list you give them complete control of your day for 12 hours a day. Where will that get you when you all of a sudden have an unexpected change in your life? For instance your wife all of a sudden gets her work schedule changed and you need to be home earlier, or you have a loved one who becomes ill and you would like to see them after work, but after work is now 10pm! It's just bad. It gives back all we fought for," Price said.

On a positive note, the new contract increases the penalty for excessive overtime grievances to triple time pay for hours worked in excess of 9.5 hours.

To make this improvement mean something, our union needs to insist on the full penalty for 9.5 violations.

Chicago UPS Teamsters Win Showdown Over Supervisors Working

UPS agrees to create more jobs, including package car positions

Chicago Local 705 has won a major showdown with UPS over supervisors working. By threatening the company with a strike, Local 705 forced UPS to create more than 200 package car and part-time jobs and to curb future supervisors working violations.

The victory is the culmination of a multi-year campaign by Local 705 to take on supervisors working violations.

Over the last three years, business agents and shop stewards won a total of 4,000 to 5,000 grievances—including 700-plus grievance settlements where the company agreed to cease and desist from having supervisors work.

When supervisors continued to work despite the "cease and desist" agreements, Local 705 smacked UPS with a 72-hour notice that the union would strike UPS for its failure to abide by grievance decisions. The strike threat brought the company to the table to seriously negotiate the creation of additional jobs.

Local 705 has revoked a 72-hour strike notice for now and UPS has agreed to create 60 new package car positions and more than 60 part-time jobs.

The local has informed UPS management that the 72-hour can be reinstated if the company fails to continue to comply with grievance resolutions.

No Dime on the Dollar

"When you let a supervisor work, you might as well let them reach into your wallet and take money out because that's what they're doing," said Bill O'Connor, a Local 705 package car steward.

"It doesn't do anybody any good to settle supervisors working grievances for ten cents on the dollar. You've got to make the company pay," O'Connor said.

After a supervisor refused to stop working and challenged O'Connor to "go file a grievance," O'Connor and other shop stewards in the Palatine Center took action. They came to work early for six weeks and won $9,000 worth of supervisors working grievances.

"Our union backed us up. When we started to win, members took notice and so did the company. Slowly but surely we're stopping supervisors from working," O'Connor said.

Local 705 Teamsters rally during the 1997 strike. In a showdown over supervisors working, Local 705 threatened to strike again after supervisors continued to work despite "cease and desist" agreements. UPS agreed to more full-time jobs.

Credible Strike Threat

UPSers in Local 705 are covered by a separate agreement from the national contract. The Local 705 contract gives the local the right to strike if UPS does not comply with grievance resolutions.

Other UPS locals do not have strike authority over company violations of local grievance settlements. However, the national contract gives local unions the right to strike if the company violates grievance settlements that are reached by the national grievance panel.

Local 705 has proven that this language can force the company to stop violations and create more jobs, including full-time positions—when our union is committed to a coordinated action plan for contract enforcement.

Local unions and the Parcel and Small Package Division can and should use the similar language in the master contract to bring the hammer down in areas where the company is serially violating supervisors working language.

Making UPS Pay for Supervisors Working

Supervisors working is a chronic problem at UPS. The new contract includes double-time penalties for violations—if our union will enforce the language.

Working Teamsters share strategies for winning grievances and making management pay for stealing our work.

Supervisors working. They're everywhere, and enforcing the contract can be a major challenge.

But Teamsters across the country report that a well-coordinated enforcement plan can turn the tide on supervisors working and make management pay for their violations.

With the penalty up to double-time in the new contract, stewards and members need to gear up to increase enforcement.

Here are some proven strategies for increasing your success:

Raise Awareness

"Filing grievances on supervisors working can really backfire if you don't talk with the members," says Dawn Stanger, a veteran grievant from Vermont Local 597. "Working at UPS is incredibly tough and overburdened workers often appreciate it if someone helps them. If a member doesn't understand why you're filing a grievance, they can end up siding with the supervisor."

Stanger's advice: "Talk with members in advance. We need to get members to understand that this is 'our' work. Personal contact is key, especially with new members, to explain why supervisors working grievances are important.

"Follow up communication is important too. I won a lot of pay for members but only when I started giving out monthly grievance updates with amounts and explanations (but not with members' names) did the practice really start to get support," Stanger said.

Document Carefully and Write Clear Grievances

Carefully documenting the violation and writing clear grievances will make it easier to hold UPS to the contract.

Make sure to include the 5 Ws in every grievance:

- **Who** was working?
- **What** were they doing?
- **Where** were they doing it?
- **When did they start** working and **when did they stop**? Including starting and stop time will give management less wiggle room to debate how long the supervisor worked.
- **Witnesses**, if any. Witnesses aren't required (our word is as good as management's) but having them strengthens your case.

Use Contract to Counter Management's Arguments

Management will often try to claim some loophole that justified supervisors working. But our contract clearly puts the burden on management to maintain a "sufficient workforce" and to "exhaust all established local practices…including where applicable double shifting, early call-ins and overtime," to have our work performed by bargaining unit employees. (Article 3, Section 7).

Strong Local Leadership Matters

"When I first began as a shop steward, my local leadership was at least good enough that when a manager laughed at one of my grievances, I knew I could get them to be more reasonable just by threatening to get my BA involved. With the company knowing I would be backed up, I was able to handle more issues on my own, without actually having to take up the BA's time.

"A couple years later (under different leadership) it got to the point that when management wanted to dismiss a grievance I'd filed, they would just smile and tell me they were going to take it up with my BA and see what he had to say about it.

"This month, a new set of leaders took office in our local. Hopefully 2008 will bring a different tone of leadership to Local 384."

Howard Hall, Shop Steward
Local 384, Norristown, Penn.

The Direct Approach: Confronting Working Supervisors

Barb Ramirez
UPS, Local 206
Eugene, Ore.

"If you're a steward always go up to a sup who is working and ask, 'What's going on? Why are you working?' Or, 'Do you need some help here?'" said Barb Ramirez from Local 206 in Eugene, Ore.

"At first this takes courage, but it gets easier and it must be done to demand respect for the contract. If you're not a steward, you can still ask these questions. If the supervisor isn't responsive, report the incident or go get the steward."

A New York Local 804 steward says, "The most effective way to stop supervisors from working is to annoy the hell out of them and their bosses.

"If a part-time or pre-load sup is seen loading a truck, ask them why they are working. If they say they are covering for someone in the restroom or something similar, stand there waiting for their return and continually pester the supervisor asking if they need you to start up. (They usually walk away and everyone gets a laugh).

"If they don't stop and no one returns, go to their supervisor (usually full time in charge of a boxline of trucks) and tell them you are going to start up and take over for the supervisor working. This will usually start up a discussion, possibly heated, about why he doesn't need you to start or he will go to the supervisor working with you and tell them to stop.

"Progressively annoy the hell out of every supervisor/manager up the ladder so they know you are serious about the issue. This takes knowledge of where to find everyone involved and to be in early enough to do the legwork.

"Eventually you won't have to go so high up the ladder to start working. Very importantly, you must be willing to start working before or after your normal working hours in order for this method to be effective because you will end up doing the work."

In some areas, each operation is required to maintain a seniority list of employees requesting coverage work and the company is required to use it.

When processing a grievance, hold management to its obligations under Article 3, Section 7.

Management's failure to adequately plan or to staff a shift is not an "Act of God" or an excuse for supervisors to work.

Weak BA? Then Handle Your Own Grievance

Many members say that weak local representation encourages supervisors working—especially when the few grievances that are filed are either dismissed or settled for a fraction of the penalty due.

We need to work together to hold our local and International Union officials accountable for firm enforcement. In the meantime, in some cases, it is better for stewards to handle their own grievances.

One Local 63 member says: "I've filed numerous grievances on working supervisors and won about 95 percent of them because my shop steward is on the same page. The 5 percent that aren't resolved are handled by my BA. He waters them down and plays 'Let's Make a Deal' before it goes to panel. We try to settle the majority of grievances at the first step."

Get Your Union on the Hook

"I highly recommend contacting the local to see what strategy they recommend," says one Michigan steward. "It makes them much more accountable if you are involving them in the process."

Coordinate With Members

"The more members, and shifts, that work together to stop the problem the more successful you'll be," says Pontiac Local 243 shop steward Darwin Moore.

"At our building, part-timers and full-timers work together and notify each other of violations. We have individuals indicate that they want any extra work available. It is always good if you can show who could have done the work and that there are members who are willing.

"UPS still tries to say it is an emergency, no one is available, and that the work is time-sensitive. But we keep grieving. We still have sups that can't keep their hands off our work, but our building is much better than most I have seen."

Give Members More Say on Contracts, Representation:

How to Change Your Bylaws

The bylaws are the constitution of your local union.

A campaign to change your bylaws can help solve problems in your local and win new rights for your members.

Last year, members in Chicago Local 726 voted two times to reject a proposed tentative agreement that didn't protect their jobs. Their bargaining committee was unelected, and members thought they didn't have a voice in bargaining.

This year members will get a chance to change that. Members will vote on a proposal to require elected representatives on the union's bargaining committee thanks to a bylaws reform campaign led by concerned Teamsters.

Changing your local's bylaws can win new rights and protections for your members, and help you build a stronger union.

Over the years, members have won many new rights this way, including elected stewards, salary caps for local officers, and rank-and-file members on contract negotiating committees.

Why Do Bylaws Matter?

It can be hard to get members excited about changing a legalistic document. Your job is to tell people why the bylaws matter. You have to focus on the issues.

The bylaws are the constitution of your local union. They define the rights and responsibilities of members, and they set the powers for your officers.

Your bylaws can set how your stewards are chosen, who bargains your contract, and how local elections are run.

Only in January

January is the time to act if you want to win changes in your bylaws. In many locals, members can only introduce new bylaws proposals this month.

Members must present the proposed changes at a union meeting. After members present a proposed change, it must be read at three consecutive union meetings.

At the third meeting, members will get a chance to vote on the changes. To win your changes, you'll need to turn out your supporters to the third meeting. Some bylaws require a two-thirds majority to amend.

What It Takes to Win

When you're trying to change your bylaws, there's a good chance you'll face opposition. What can you do to overcome the opposition and win these changes?

Pick an issue and focus on it. What's the issue that matters most to members in your local? In some locals, members may be getting bad representation from appointed stewards. Or members may be mad about givebacks in a new contract.

Explain your case. Use the three months before the vote to build support for the new bylaws. Put together a flyer that explains the issue, and get it out to members in all of the major sections of your local.

Don't get too technical in your flyer—explain the change in simple terms and keep the focus on the issue. Contact TDU for help in making a leaflet.

Turn out your supporters for the vote. Even if you have many supporters, you can still lose if they don't show up at the meeting. Keep a list of names and phone numbers of people who support your proposal. In some campaigns, members have circulated a petition in support of the new bylaws. Then the week before the meeting, call and remind people of the meeting and ask them to be there. In some locals, members organized carpools to the meeting to boost turnout.

Get the Wording Right

Since bylaws are legally binding documents, it's important to get the language in your proposal right. In some cases, Hoffa has vetoed reforms approved by local union members because of language technicalities.

TDU can help. We have copies of language that has been approved by the IBT and lawyers who can review your proposals before you run into a challenge.

Bylaws: What You Can Win

These are examples of new rights members in some locals have won by changing their bylaws:

- ✔ **The right to elect shop stewards by a secret ballot vote**
- ✔ **The right to elect rank-and-file representatives to contract negotiating committees**
- ✔ **The right to a mail ballot and independent supervision of local officer elections**
- ✔ **The right to vote on any proposed increases in officers' salaries**
- ✔ **The right to have contract and bylaws translated into Spanish or other languages**

Fighting for the Future

Local 726 Members Push for Bylaws Change

Give Members a Say

"It's about making members' voices heard. Leadership isn't just who sits up front at the hall, it's about members having a say on how our local runs.

"Now the membership has a real chance to vote these bylaw changes up at our March 2008 meeting. We can make Local 726 officers work for the members."

Vince Tenuto, Local 726
City of Chicago

Change continues to be on the agenda in Chicago Local 726 as Members of the Fighting for the Future Team plan to reintroduce bylaws changes they made last January.

They're at it again because they won a protest at Joint Council 25 over how Local 726 officers conducted the vote. This year, there has to be a verified count on the bylaws proposals, instead of a rigged voice vote.

Fighting for the Future is pushing for members to get a say on who bargains their contracts. Last year Fighting for the Future led a campaign to vote down a tentative agreement that failed to protect members' jobs. Local 726 members voted down the deal twice and won improvements.

This year, Fighting for the Future is proposing three changes:

- Include rank-and-file members on bargaining committees;
- Protect members' voting rights by mandating advance notification from Local 726 on membership status for voting purposes;
- Increase membership participation in the local by setting a new meeting time for general membership meetings.

Vince Tenuto sees the bylaw changes this way: "It's about making members' voices heard. Leadership isn't just who sits up front at the hall, it's about members having a say on how our local runs. The officers ran a piss poor vote count last year and we made sure they were held accountable. The Joint Council backed us up. Now the membership has a real chance to vote these bylaw changes up at our March 2008 meeting. We can make Local 726 officers work for the members."

Want to Change Your Bylaws?

TDU can help. Contact TDU for organizing advice and model language. Call (313) 842-2600 or email info@tdu.org.

Honoring Martin Luther King's Legacy of Civil and Labor Rights:

Local 807 Members Petition Kraft to Respect Martin Luther King Day

Forty years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, where he was organizing support for striking sanitation workers.

Today, many Teamster members still don't have Martin Luther King Day off, even though it's a federal holiday.

Even worse, at least one Teamster employer marks Martin Luther King Day by laying off Teamster drivers without pay.

Last year, Kraft laid off every Local 807 driver without pay on MLK Day. Drivers are now circulating a petition telling Kraft to honor King's legacy.

This year, Local 807 members are standing up against this practice.

Kraft Foods in Fairlawn, N.J. employs union bakers and Teamster drivers. Confectionery Local 719 members have Martin Luther King Day as a paid holiday in their contract—but the Teamster drivers who are covered by the National Master Freight Agreement do not.

For years, Kraft gave the drivers the choice of working on MLK Day or taking the day off without pay. But last year, Kraft laid off every Local 807 driver without pay.

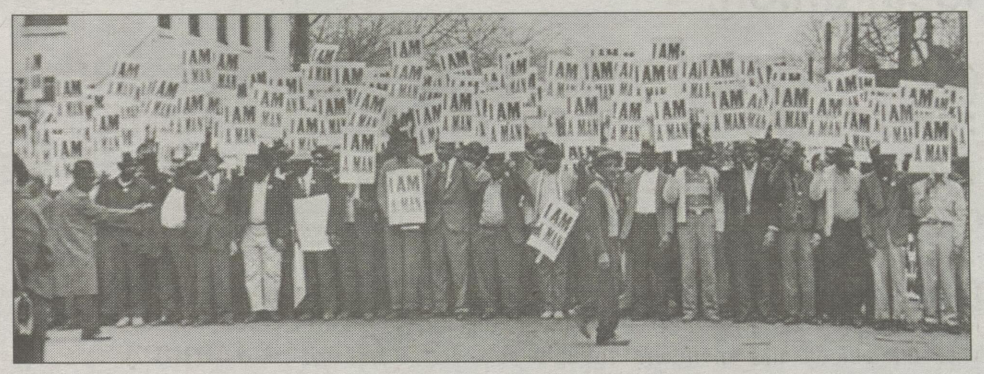
This year, Local 807 members circulated a petition calling on Kraft management "to honor Dr. King's legacy of standing up for civil and labor rights—not to disrespect it by involuntarily laying us off on Martin Luther King Day."

The petition goes on to say, "If Kraft is not going to give us MLK Day as a paid holiday like other union employees in Fairlawn, then the company should resume its prior practice of giving each Local 807 member the choice of working or taking the day off without pay."

As *Convoy* goes to press, Kraft has not yet responded to the petition.

"The Teamsters should be more proactive about winning Martin Luther King Day as a contractual holiday," said Michael Spruill, the Local 807 driver who launched the petition drive.

"Martin Luther King died supporting union members. He gave his life to win justice for all people. This country would be a shell of itself if it wasn't for Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement," Spruill said.



Striking sanitation workers in Memphis, 1968. Martin Luther King was assassinated while he was working to organize support for the strikers, but many Teamsters still do not have MLK Day as a contractual holiday.

Fight for MLK Day

"The Teamsters should be more proactive about winning Martin Luther King Day as a contractual holiday. Martin Luther King died supporting union members. He gave his life to win justice for all people. This country would be a shell of itself if it wasn't for Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement."

Mike Spruill, Local 807
Kraft, Fairlawn, N.J.

University of Chicago

Chicago Teamsters Reject Deal, Win Gains

With little support from their outgoing officers, Teamsters at the University of Chicago won some gains in their contract after voting down the tentative deal twice.

Now members have approved a new tentative agreement that includes better language.

Rank-and-file members held lunchtime meetings and picnics to push for a stronger agreement, and they reached out to other campus unions.

"The union and the company told us this was the best deal they could offer us, but each time we voted down the deal, they made improvements," said Joe Sexauer, a member of Local 743 at the University. Local 743 represents 1,100 clerical and maintenance workers at U of C.

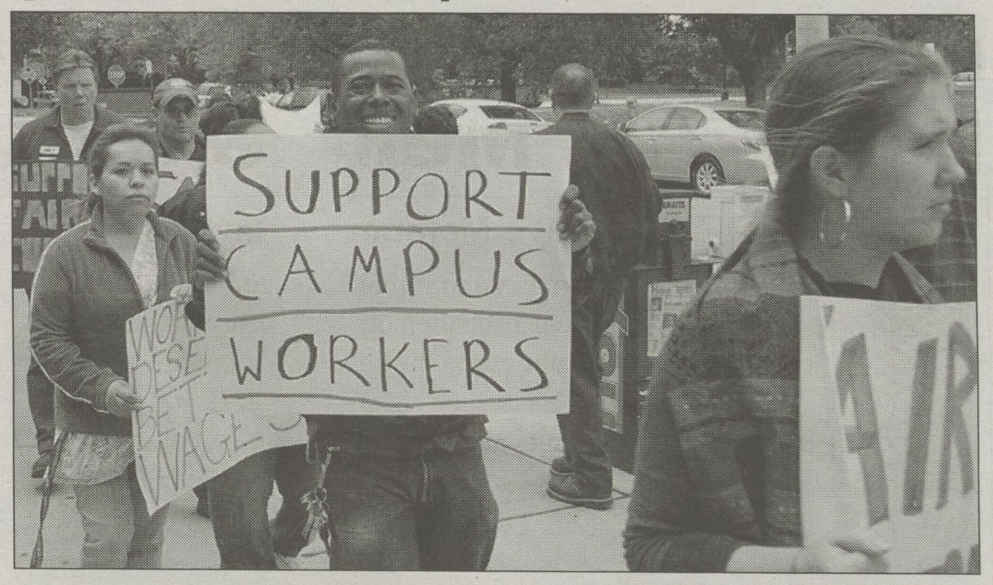
In September, members voted the first agreement down 533 to 47. They voted the second offer down by 58 percent. The union gave the members only a few days notice before each vote.

Wages were the biggest sticking point for members. Management insisted they could only afford a 10 percent increase over the life of the contract. By holding out, members pushed their raise up to 10.5 percent.

Rank-and-file members held lunchtime meetings and picnics to push for a stronger agreement, and they reached out to SEIU and other unions on campus for support.

This vote came just days before new officers took office on January 1. Longtime TDU member Richard Berg and the 743 New Leadership Slate won a narrow victory over the old officers after waging a hard-fought reform campaign.

"I'm proud of our members for holding out for a better deal," said Sexauer. "We're laying the foundation for having a stronger union at the University. We've built a new network, we've got momentum, and we have new officers."



Local 743 members at the University of Chicago reached out to students and other unions to win a better deal. Members won some contract improvements after rejecting a tentative deal twice.

Get the word out!

Distribute *Convoy Dispatch*. Bundles come in sizes from 10 copies ($5/issue) to 100 copies ($14/issue) or more. To order or for more information: **(313) 842-2600.**

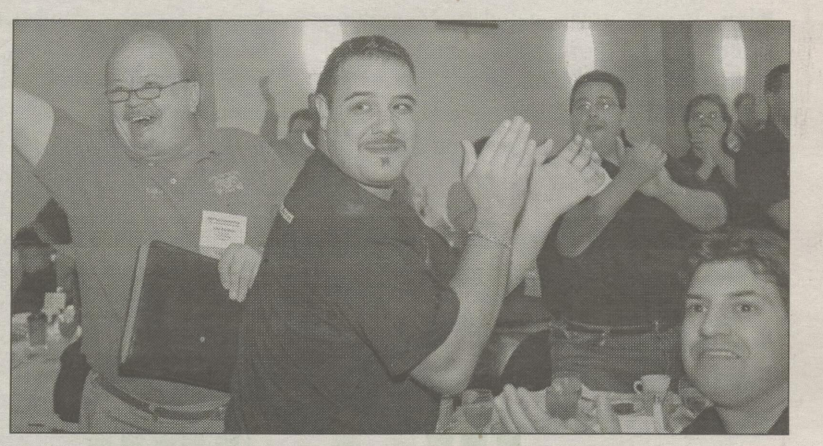
New Year's Resolutions for a Stronger Union

Were you happy with our union's direction in 2007?

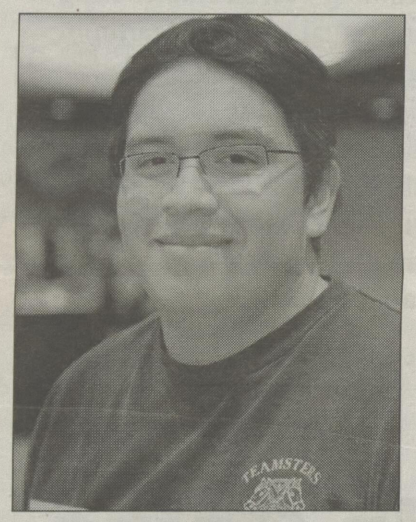
This new year is a good time to start cutting back on the fat and exercising Teamster Power more.

Concerned Teamsters are setting goals and making plans to put our union back on track for 2008.

Can you help do your part?



Enforce Our Contracts



"Now that we have a new agreement with UPS, we've got to enforce it. The new deal increases the penalties for supervisors working and for excessive overtime—we've got to make sure that when there's a violation, we make them pay. We all know UPS management isn't going to stick to the contract unless we make them. That's why TDU and the Make UPS Deliver network are going to be working hard to educate members about how we can make the company honor their word."

Alex Tenchavez, Local 396
UPS, Los Angeles

Educate Our Members

"Our union is stronger when members know the facts. But our top leaders want to keep us in the dark. I just started a bundle of 100 *Convoys* every issue so that I can help members stay in the loop with what's happening in our union—and how we can make it better.

"There are a lot of buildings in my local to cover, and I'm going to work hard to get the word out. That's how we're laying the groundwork for building a stronger union."

Darrin Ziemba, Local 264
C&S Wholesale, Buffalo, N.Y.

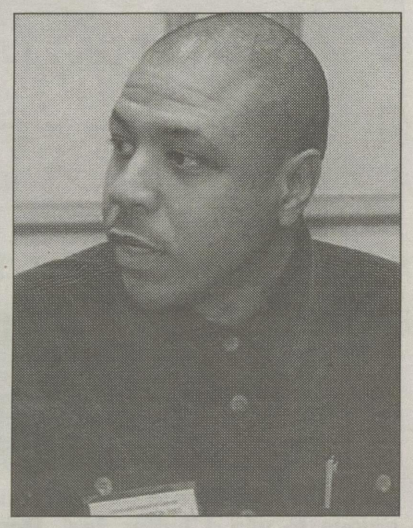
Build a Strong TDU

"To get a stronger union, we need a stronger TDU.

"We just held a TDU meeting here in Little Rock to talk about the new contract at UPS, representation from our local BAs, and how we can use our power more in 2008. And many members who came joined TDU.

"We're going to keep meeting, keep recruiting, and keep fighting for a stronger union."

Louis Irby, Local 878
UPS, Little Rock, Ark.



What Are Your 2008 Resolutions?

What are your goals for our union in 2008? Contact TDU for advice and help. Call (313) 842-2600 or email info@tdu.org. We're stronger when we work together.

Join TDU

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Company _____

E-mail _____

❑ City ❑ Road ❑ Dock ❑ Clerical ❑ Warehouse ❑ Construction ❑ Production

Other _____

___ $40 one-year membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch*

___ $95 three-year membership fee

___ $25 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than $22,000 a year

___ $25 for retirees. Retired from Local _____

❑ Check or money order

MC/Visa/AmEx/Discover # _____ Exp. Date _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers. Only funds from Teamster members and their spouses can be used for campaign purposes.